

Africa Weather Hazards Benefits Assessment

for

March 23, 2006 – March 29, 2006

Weekly Introduction:

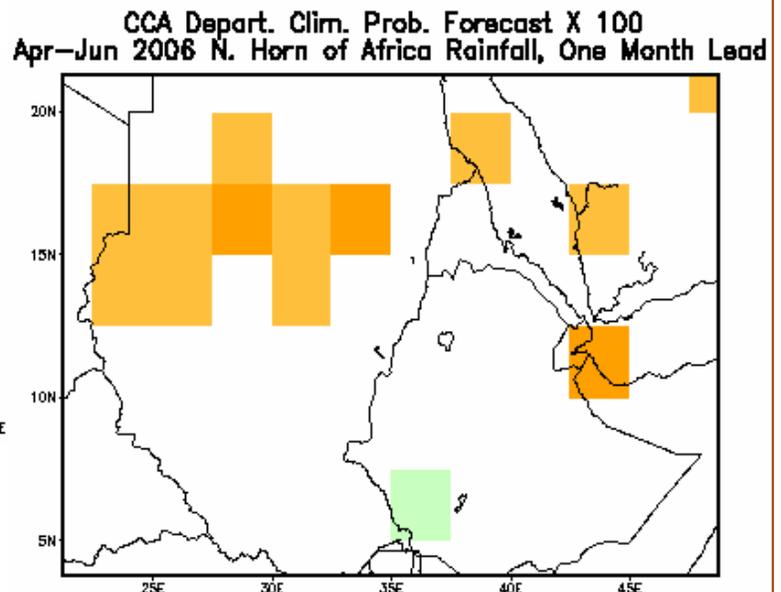
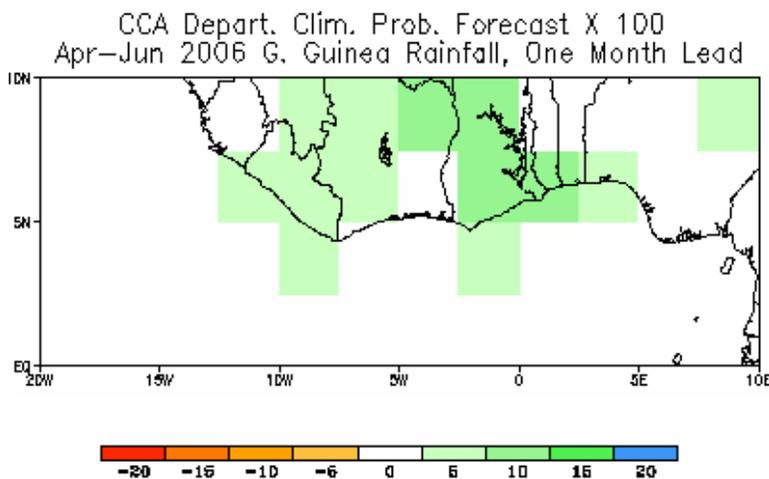
Update of CPC Seasonal Outlooks at One-Month Lead: April-June 2006 Forecasts

Gulf of Guinea Region

The outlook for April-June 2006 Gulf of Guinea rainfall at one month lead shows a slight tilt in the odds favoring above average rainfall over many areas in the Gulf of Guinea, including Liberia, eastern Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, and along the coastal areas in Togo and Benin.

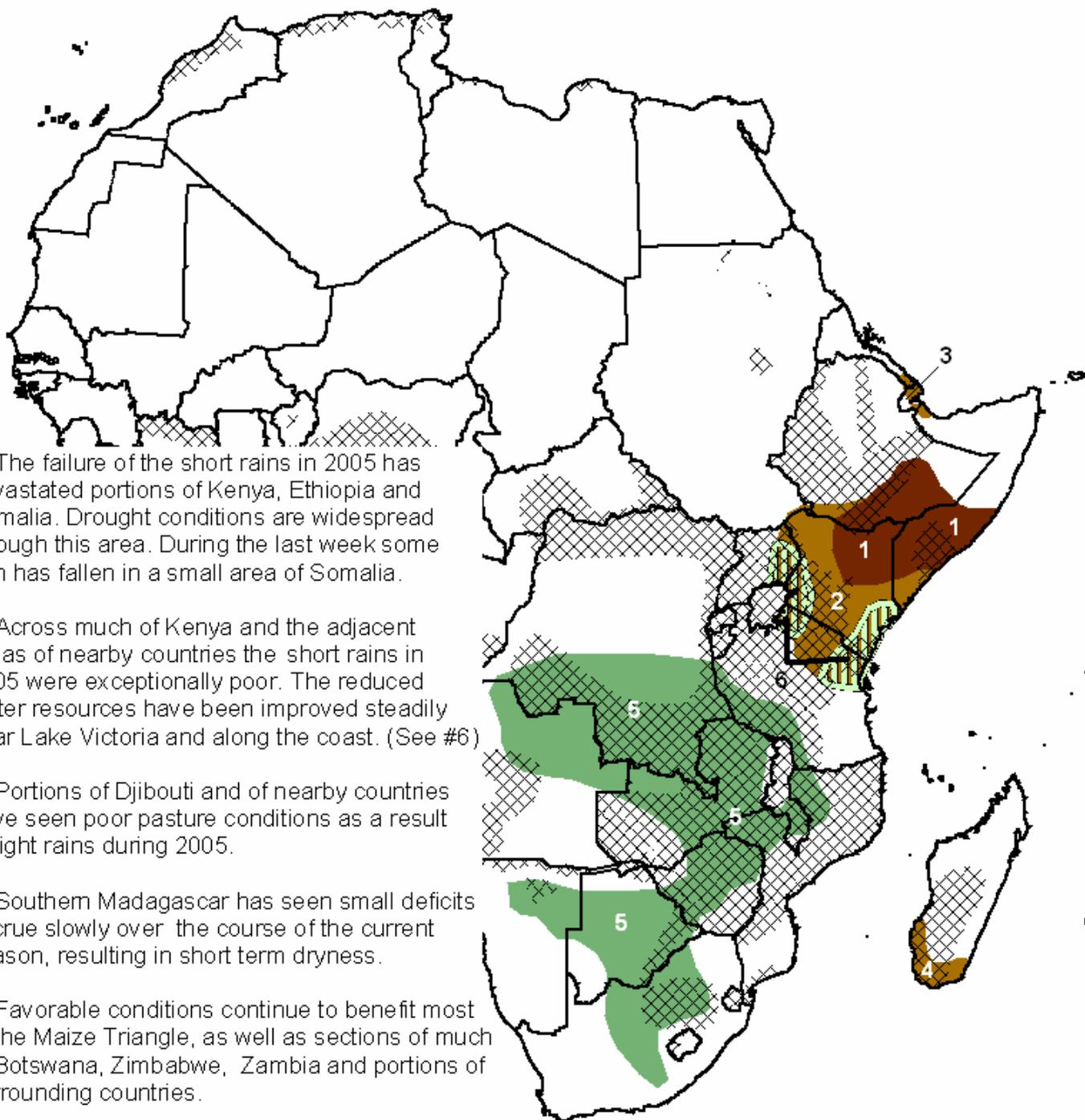
Northern Horn of Africa

There is a slight tilt in the odds favoring below normal rainfall over central Sudan and Djibouti. There is a slight tilt in the odds favoring above normal rainfall locally over southwestern Ethiopia.



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NOTE: Black hatched regions depict combined wheat, maize, sorghum, and millet crop zones which are active (sowing to harvest) during the current month. (from FAO)



1) The failure of the short rains in 2005 has devastated portions of Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia. Drought conditions are widespread through this area. During the last week some rain has fallen in a small area of Somalia.

2) Across much of Kenya and the adjacent areas of nearby countries the short rains in 2005 were exceptionally poor. The reduced water resources have been improved steadily near Lake Victoria and along the coast. (See #6)

3) Portions of Djibouti and of nearby countries have seen poor pasture conditions as a result of light rains during 2005.

4) Southern Madagascar has seen small deficits accrue slowly over the course of the current season, resulting in short term dryness.

5) Favorable conditions continue to benefit most of the Maize Triangle, as well as sections of much of Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia and portions of surrounding countries.

6) Dry conditions continue to receive relief around the Lake Victoria Basin. During the last week rain also began falling along sections of the Kenya coast.

Valid: March 23 - 29, 2006

Weather Hazards Benefits Text Explanation:

1. Drought conditions are prevalent in the northeastern quadrant of Kenya and extending into Ethiopia's Somali and Oromiya regions. In Somalia a large portion of the south has been severely impacted. In these areas water resources have become extremely limited, and pastoral and agricultural livelihoods have been devastated. These circumstances were caused by the failure of the 2005 short rains, and in many areas the failure of several consecutive wet seasons. Precipitation did fall during the past week in parts of Somalia; however, it may have caused more harm than good. People, livestock, and dry soil weakened by the drought may have had a difficult time coping dealing with the more than 20 mm precipitation that fell. The coming week will likely bring universally dry conditions to the region.
2. The majority of Kenya, as well as neighboring portions of Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia and Somalia experienced below normal rainfall during the 2005 short rains. These areas have not suffered nearly as much as the areas to their immediate north (See #1), precipitation deficits have reduced drinking water, degraded pastures, and caused crop damage. In Tanzania, for more than a month severe power rationing has been in place as a result of low reservoir levels at the Mtera Hydroelectric dam. The worst impacted area is Kenya's bimodal regions where deficits exceed 200 mm. There has been steady improvement near Lake Victoria, as well as more recent improvement in Kenya's coastal regions.
3. Reduced pastures and drinking water in and around Djibouti have placed a strain on available resources. Conditions have been improving slowly as some moisture has moved into the area from the Red Sea. Even with this relief the area will need the start of the 2006 rainy season to fully recover. Conditions in the vicinity of the capital have been near normal.
4. Rainfall during the 2005-2006 wet season has been below normal in southern Madagascar. Deficits have reached around 150 mm below normal. A dry spell that has lasted over a month in many areas has had a negative impact on water resources in the area. Light rainfall is expected to bring some relief to the area during the coming period.
5. A large area of Southern Africa has been experiencing ideal agricultural, pastoral, and hydrological conditions during the 2005-2006 season, with only localized deviations from normal precipitation. Conditions are expected to remain good during the coming period.
6. Relief has continued to benefit the dry areas near Lake Victoria and along the coast in Kenya. Although lighter rainfall is expected during the coming period, up to and exceeding 50 mm of rain benefited the area. It should be noted that this rainfall may have caused some problems with people, livestock and soils already weakened from the dry conditions that have negatively impacted the area.

AUTHOR: Eric J Wolvovsky

Questions or comments about this product may be directed to Chet.Schmitt@noaa.gov or 1-301-763-8000 x7519

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